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Indigenous attire, exoticization, and social change: dressing and undressing among the Emberá of Panama

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In the final quarter of the twentieth century, the Emberá in Panama abandoned their traditional attire in favour of Western clothes. Recently, however, the introduction of indigenous tourism in the country has encouraged a positive re-evaluation of Emberá traditional attire and enhanced its visibility nationally and internationally. Such transformations in Emberá dress – both the disregard for and re-evaluation of it – can shed some light on the fluid, non-unidirectional nature of social change in indigenous society. I argue that Western exoticization – inherent in the expectation of the authentic and/or the suspicion that particular traditions are 'invented' – misrepresents the complexity and dynamic nature of Emberá clothing practices. Contemporary Emberá choices about how to dress in different contexts should instead be understood as responses to two forms of exoticization: the stereotyping of indigenous practices, but also their idealization. In this rendering, the reintroduction of the old Emberá ways of dressing, when this occurs, should be read not as a static imitation of the past, but instead as a reflexive adjustment to new opportunities for cultural representation in the present.

A Google search under the entry 'Emberá' produces an avalanche of images of Emberá men, women, and children who are, in their overwhelming majority, dressed in traditional attire. These are images of Emberá bodies painted with the juice of the *jagua* fruit and adorned with necklaces and beaded strings. The only visible fabric garments are loincloths, used by men, and rectangular pieces of cloth used by women as a skirt, the *parumas*, all of which are notable in their vivid colouring. The attention-grabbing style of this traditional attire conforms to stereotypical Western expectations of Amerindian rainforest dwellers – such are indeed the Emberá – and to the Western imagination of the exotic more generally. Yet, thirty years ago, the decline in use of traditional Emberá attire, and their adoption of modern clothes, seemed inevitable and irreversible. The development of indigenous tourism and the Western idealization of the exotic have set in motion an opposite process, which encourages the valorization of traditional Emberá cultural practices, and Emberá attire more specifically. Once more, the Emberá way of dress, which captured the imagination of early twentieth-century explorers (Howe 1998: 215-17; 2009: 120), is now admired by audiences of tourists.

The transformations in the dress code of the Emberá comprise a compelling example of social change in indigenous society, indicating that the direction of change

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does not inevitably lead to the total replacement of indigenous forms by modern or exogenous elements. The shifting codes of Emberá dress in particular epitomize the flexibility with which contemporary indigenous groups respond to two contradictory types of exoticization: the negative stereotyping of indigenous practices and their idealization (Berkhofer 1978; Conklin 1997; Ramos 1998). Whereas exoticization in the form of negative stereotyping suppresses the everyday use of traditional Emberá attire, exoticization as an idealizing nostalgia for the 'unspoiled and irrecoverable past' (Herzfeld 1997: 109; Rosaldo 1989) has encouraged a renewed respect for traditional Emberá dress codes. Thus, paradoxically, exoticization has been associated with both the decline and the positive re-evaluation of Emberá attire, and also its privileged treatment (by outsiders) 'as an index of authenticity' (Conklin 1997: 712).

Drawing comparisons with previous descriptions from the 1960s (see Reverte Coma 2002; Torres de Araúz 1966; 1980), I attempt to capture ethnographically the changes in Emberá clothing practices and introduce into the anthropological discussion the hitherto un-theorized topic of Emberá dress. My analysis is inspired by a recent re-emergence of anthropological interest in body arts (O'Hanlon 2007; Schildkrout 2004) and the materiality of clothing (Küchler and Miller 2005), and by a small number of articles that address the contradictions between traditional and Western dress in indigenous societies (Conklin 1997; 2007; Ewart 2007; Gow 2007; Knauft 2007; Santos-Granero 2009; Veber 1992; 1996). Although body decoration has an established place in the anthropological literature, and many classic accounts can help us appreciate the social intersections of bodily adornment and its culturally specific meaning or symbolism (see, e.g., Gell 1975; Lévi-Strauss 1963; Seeger 1975; A. Strathern & Strathern 1971; M. Strathern 1971; Turner 1980; 1992), the adoption of Western mass-produced clothes by indigenous groups – and the contradictions arising from the reintroduction of traditional dress – has, until recently, not been directly confronted by the discipline (Ewart 2007: 38; Gow 2007: 55; O'Hanlon 2007: 5; Veber 1996: 156). This can be seen as the result of the denigration of clothes in Western academia, which treats surfaces, in general, as superficial (Miller 2005).

The ethnography presented in this article redresses this relative neglect by thoroughly examining Emberá clothing practices – not merely traditional attire, but also the use of Western clothes – in a time of change. Ironically, the re-valorization of traditional Emberá attire occurred at a time when the Emberá had adopted Western clothes as their daily dress, a gradual process that took place over the last quarter of the twentieth century. Many Emberá who are alive today were brought up with the old dress code, only to get accustomed to mass-produced clothes during their adulthood, and experience later in their lives the positive re-evaluation of the old dress code – and its part-time reintroduction in those communities that have developed tourism. This complex and fluid process of change, far from representing a unidirectional transition from tradition to modernity, can be seen as a transformation of previous transformations (Gow 2001: 127), infused with new local meaning (Veber 1996: 156), but also accommodating the discourses and exoticized expectations of others (Conklin & Graham 1995; Peluso & Alexiades 2005).

I would like to note here that my use of the terms 'reintroduction' or 'revival' does not allude to the notion of the invention of tradition as coined by Hobsbawm (1983) to account for institutionalized practices in Western nation-states. Hobsbawm's use of the term 'invention' introduces a presupposition of inauthenticity – Hobsbawm himself juxtaposed 'invented' to 'genuine' traditions. This presupposition suspiciously

resembles the aesthetic judgements of Western travellers who assume that they are in a position to evaluate authenticity based on their exoticized expectations, and the idea that 'the expansion of civilization' is 'necessarily destructive of nature and existent cultural diversity' (Gow 2007: 54). Thus, Hobsbawm's notion of invention, when applied to the study of indigenous society, indirectly advances 'the view that the only authentic tradition is one uncontaminated by Western culture', a position which is profoundly ahistorical (Santos-Granero 2009: 492; see also Veber 1996: 157).

According to Hobsbawm's model, when this is applied to indigenous societies, the 'invented' or 'constructed' dimension of culture is set in opposition to an imagined authentic or natural set of cultural practices. I argue that presuppositions of this type obscure our understanding of the rootedness of Emberá clothing practices. For that reason, based on a framework of analysing authenticity that prioritizes cultural creativity and improvisation (Bruner 1993; 2005; Ingold & Hallam 2007), I see 'tradition' as a dynamic and adaptable process, and 'traditional attire' not as a static representation of the past, but as a dress style capable of adjusting to the demands of the present. From this perspective, Emberá authenticity lies in the ability of the Emberá to claim authorship of their cultural practices, adapt new elements of dress to their own cultural matrix, and consciously reintroduce the dress code of the past in the present.

The fieldwork upon which this article is based has taken place over a six-year period. In total, I have spent seventeen months in the field, spread over periods of two and four months each year since 2005. My annual returns to the field have made me particularly attuned to social change, including attitudes and practices towards dress. While my main field site is Parara Puru, a village in the Chagres National Park, which was one of the first Emberá communities to develop indigenous tourism, I have also made several field trips to Darién, visiting Emberá communities in the centre and fringe of the Panamanian Emberá world. This comparative dimension of my research has allowed me to observe the differences and similarities in the clothing practices of communities that do or do not receive tourists, and between homogeneous Emberá communities and Emberá neighbourhoods on the outskirts of non-indigenous towns.

The decline of Emberá clothing

The Emberá are an American indigenous group who have historically inhabited lowland rainforest ecosystems in Colombia and Panama. The Emberá who currently live in Panama – and the Wounaan who speak a language that belongs to the same linguistic group – have migrated from the Colombian region of Chocó.[1] Both groups have been referred to – in older ethnographic accounts, and among the general public in Colombia and Panama – as the Chocó (plural, Chocoes), a term that indicates their place of origin, but it has now been replaced by the politically correct terms Emberá and Wounaan.[2] Migration to new, unoccupied upper river sectors, ideally away from the settlements of other ethnic groups (Faron 1962; Kane 1994; Velásquez Runk 2009), has been for these people a well-established strategy, one that protected their cultural integrity in the colonial past (Williams 2004).

In the twentieth century, Emberá migration through the river systems of Darién – the province of Panama that borders with Colombia – resulted in a steady pattern of geographical expansion. In search of marriage partners, new hunting or fishing grounds, and land suitable for slash-and-burn cultivation, the Emberá settled by several rivers and their tributaries in Darién. The region, under-populated and not easily accessible owing to the dense rainforest and lack of roads, offered considerable

geographical independence, an attribute the Emberá particularly desire (Faron 1962; Kane 1994). Living in relatively unapproachable communities upriver, they maintained their language, customs, and traditional attire. The latter involved minimal covering of the body – primarily loincloths (*andiás*) and skirts made from a single piece of cloth (*parumas*) – and body painting with *jagua* juice. The use of cotton fabrics for *andiás* and *parumas* can be identified in photographs from the earlier part of the twentieth century,[3] although contemporary Emberá respondents insist that during the same period *andiás* and *parumas* from bark cloth (*kuéporo* or *cocúa*) still survived.

With the intensification of plantain cultivation in the middle part of the twentieth century (Faron 1962; Herlihy 1986; Loewen 1985; Torres de Araúz 1966),[4] the Emberá were able to afford 'Western' commodities more easily than before. With their canoes filled with plantains, they visited the towns of the Darienitas – the black Spanish-speaking inhabitants of Darién – where they sold their produce and bought market goods, including fabrics to make *parumas* and *andiás*. Thus, the old practice of tree-bark clothing gradually died out. In the towns, wealthier Emberá men commissioned Darienita silversmiths to cast them silver jewellery (primarily earrings), while the Emberá themselves cold-hammered silver coins to produce pendants (Isacsson 1993: 35; Reverte Coma 2002; Torres de Araúz 1966: 56; cf. Wassén 1935: 71). It is evident that, throughout the twentieth century, Emberá men of significance, such as renowned shamans (*haibanás*), had in their possession jewellery with elaborate designs.[5]

In the second half of the twentieth century, the use of Western items of clothing by the Emberá – t-shirts, shirts, short and long trousers – gradually increased, albeit at a different pace in different communities in Panama. From Darién, the Emberá migrated to unpopulated locations closer to mainstream Panamanian population, such as the rivers Bayano and Chagres. Reina Torres de Araúz observed in the 1960s that the Emberá of the Bayano area were dressed (in general) in European-type clothes (1966: 144). At the same time, the Emberá living in more inaccessible communities in Darién used Western clothes only during their short visits to the Darienita towns downriver, happily relinquishing themselves of this burden on their return journey upriver (Reverte Coma 2002: 209). It is worth mentioning here that all people in Panama – indigenous or not, women and men – are obliged by law to cover their upper body in public spaces, and as I will describe in the following sections, the practice of dressing in Western clothes to visit the town is still a feature of Emberá life.

With the passage of time, and especially during the last quarter of the twentieth century, the use of modern clothes spread from being for the occasional visit to town into everyday life. Men became accustomed to the use of shorts, and gradually abandoned the loincloth, while the women, who until then preferred to go about their daily activities topless, gradually made standard the wearing of cotton tops, which they wore above their *paruma* skirts. As I have already indicated, proximity to non-indigenous communities influenced the speed and degree of these changes. There were also two additional factors: schooling and missionary activity.

From the 1950s, the Emberá gradually considered the possibility of setting up concentrated communities – as opposed to their previous dispersed pattern of settlement (Herlihy 1985; 1986; 2003; Kane 1994; Velásquez Runk 2009). In the late 1960s and the 1970s, the government actively encouraged concentrated settlement, offering primary school education to the new communities and, in some parts of Darién, a certain degree of political autonomy within two geographically demarcated semi-autonomous reservations (the *Comarcas*). Cement school buildings were constructed even in the

most inaccessible river sectors, and provided an incentive for Emberá families to settle around them. To attend school, the Emberá children, like all children in the country, have to wear a uniform. For several of my (now adult) respondents – who during their early years enjoyed considerable freedom from wearing modern clothes – this was the first time they had to wear shirts and shoes, which in the beginning, they told me, they found uncomfortable.

In colonial times, the Emberá resisted Christian proselytizing, aided by their dispersed settlement and migration to inaccessible locations (Williams 2004). When Christian missionaries had influence, they discouraged 'the "barbarian" habit of decorating the human face with lip and nose ornaments' (Isacsson 1993: 38). Later, in the earlier part of the twentieth century, the Emberá dealt with the pressure of the Catholic Church by avoiding direct confrontation. When priests and missionaries departed – exhausted by life in the rainforest – the majority of the Emberá relied on the guidance of their shamans. In the last part of the twentieth century, however, the presence of North American Evangelical Churches has been more resilient and supported by the provision of much-needed medical care. A few communities in Darién were founded by groups of Emberá and Wounaan who were directly supported by particular churches (Herlihy 1986; Loewen 1985). As a consequence, an increasing number of Emberá have come closer to Christianity (cf. Velásquez Runk 2009: 460) and avoid participation in shamanic practices.

With respect to clothing practices, the Christian message had a constraining effect on the use of traditional Emberá attire. Even when the missionaries tolerated the use of the *parumas*, the women started covering their upper bodies systematically. Nevertheless, missionary activity was not, by all means, the only influence. In the last quarter of the twentieth century, cheap clothes – often made in China – found their way to even the most provincial Panamanian markets and became relatively accessible to indigenous minorities. At the same time, school education, the widespread use of radio, and, in the last ten years, television sets, have all contributed to an increased awareness among the Emberá of clothing practices in the non-Emberá world. As a result, a majority of Emberá women, including women in the most inaccessible communities, have developed a preference, and in some cases a strong desire, to cover the upper part of their body, while men prefer shorts and trousers and do not use the loincloth, except for rare occasions that involve presentations for tourists.

Towards a revival of Emberá clothing

At the dawn of the new millennium, an increasing number of Emberá communities have become interested in developing indigenous tourism as an alternative source of revenue to plantain cultivation. This is a response to the attempts by the Panamanian government to promote cultural tourism more generally (cf. Guerrón-Montero 2006; Pereiro Pérez, de León, Martínez Mauri, Ventocilla & del Valle 2010; Tice 1995), but also to the successful engagement of a small number of Emberá communities with tourism. Most communities that entertain tourists on a regular basis are located close to Panama City and the Canal.[6] Owing to the relative ease of accessibility, they attract considerable numbers of tourists from hotels and cruise ships. The successful entry of these communities into the tourism economy has inspired the leaders of Emberá communities throughout Panama to contemplate the possibility of engaging with tourism directly or indirectly. Interest in tourism more generally has inspired a re-evaluation of indigenous cultural practices within the Emberá world (Theodossopoulos 2007; 2010*a*; 2011), including a renewed appreciation of Emberá attire.

Emberá experimentation with tourism was initiated in the early 1990s in the general Chagres area, the location of Parara Puru, the community which is the primary focus of my fieldwork. The foundation of the Chagres National Park in 1985 constrained systematic cultivation and hunting, depriving the descendants of the Emberá families who had migrated there in the 1950s and 1960s of their traditional means of subsistence. The development of tourism was a response to these restrictions, and reflected the attempts of the local Emberá to secure an alternative source of income. Most of the Emberá involved were brought up in Chagres in closer contact with non-indigenous Panamanians and by the 1980s had already adopted non-indigenous clothes (with the exception of some women who used the *parumas* in daily life). The idea of tourism was introduced by non-Emberá Panamanians working for tourism agencies and NGOs in Panama City who also volunteered to help the Emberá with the logistics of tourism. The Emberá in Chagres contributed their knowledge about their own culture and made themselves available – dressed according to the Emberá code – to meet tourists, dance, sell indigenous artefacts, and talk about their life in the rainforest.

For the Emberá in Chagres, tourism also signalled an opportunity to come closer, as they say, to their culture. Most were able to speak fluent Emberá, although the younger community members were also increasingly using Spanish in their daily life. All had an embodied experience of the Emberá life-style, having been brought up in dispersed Emberá households in the Chagres rainforest. They knew very well how to hunt, cultivate, cook, and build houses 'in the Emberá way', and preferred marrying people of 'their own race', my respondents in Parara Puru explained while reflecting on this period. But several families, they added, had moved down the river to live closer to non-indigenous settlements. Only the older men and women had embodied memories of the Emberá clothing code, and although several women were still using their *parumas*, the majority were unaccustomed to being topless.

To prepare for tourism, the younger community members had to ask the advice of the elders, brush up their dancing skills, start more frequently practising Emberá music, and redirect their talents in sculpture and weaving towards the production of marketable Emberá artefacts. They also dressed in full traditional attire to honour their guests, my respondents maintain, and show them the Emberá way of life. For some of the younger men this was the first time they wore the loincloth – a garment stereotyped in Panama as indicative of primitiveness – and had to learn how to feel comfortable in it.

The initial experiment of the Emberá with tourism proved that there was a tourist demand for indigenous cultural presentations. Several competing tourist agencies in Panama City have since undertaken the advertising and organization of tours to Chagres, including the transportation of the tourists. The Emberá charge the tourists an admission fee for the cultural presentations, which, in most cases, they negotiate with and collect from the agents.[7] So, having a base – ideally a concentrated community within which to control the tourism exchange – became an issue of vital importance for the Emberá. In 1998, the park authorities approved the foundation of the contemporary Parara Puru, in a new location at the river Chagres, which became the permanent residence of its inhabitants. Another pre-existing Emberá community on the same river had by that time already engaged in tourism, and a third one was founded shortly afterwards. Nowadays there are four Emberá communities practising tourism within the National Park, and six in the overall Canal area.

The foundation of spatially concentrated communities – as opposed to dispersed settlement – was for the Panamanian Emberá a more general process that enhanced

political representation, but limited the accessibility and availability of cultivated land (Herlihy 1986; Kane 1994). In Chagres – where systematic cultivation was prohibited by the National Park – the residents of the new 'concentrated' communities benefited from the cash-flow of the tourist economy, and from electing leaders who represented local interests in negotiations with tourist agents and the park authorities. In the last ten years, the flow of tourists has been regular, and work for tourism is now the main occupation of the Emberá residing in these communities. During the high tourist season, they are dressed in Emberá attire almost on a daily basis and for the greater part of the day. When the tourists depart in the afternoon, traditional attire is replaced by modern clothes, with the exception of the *paruma* skirts, which are worn by women and girls throughout the day.

In the last ten years, the frequent use of Emberá attire in the communities that have developed tourism has brought about a more general familiarization of the local Emberá with their traditional code of dress. This was a significant stage in the revival of Emberá clothing in Chagres, represented by the unreserved use of traditional attire within permanent Emberá communities. Both men and women now feel at ease in traditional garb and frequently comment about its relative comfort in comparison to covering a greater part of their body with modern clothes. A few women in Parara Puru and in other communities at Chagres have started carrying out their household chores topless, as in the old times. They proudly justify their choice by referring to the Emberá tradition: 'We follow the ways of our mothers and our grandmothers', they declare. Other women are still ambivalent about being topless (although they are positive about the use of traditional attire overall); they take their t-shirts off to work in tourism and put them back immediately after the end of the cultural presentations (but continue wearing their *parumas*).

More generally, however, the successful introduction of tourism in Chagres has inspired a more widespread revalorization of traditional attire within the Emberá world. The leaders of some relatively inaccessible communities in Darién encourage young girls to refine their skill in traditional dancing even in the absence of tourists. In

Figure 1. Emberá in Parara Puru dressed in traditional attire. (All photos are by the author.)

spontaneous celebrations, the young girls start a dance topless and painted with *jagua* – according to tradition – while older women do not hesitate to take off their t-shirts and join in subsequent dances. Men are less likely to get dressed in traditional attire, but they do so if the opportunity obliges (e.g. if foreign visitors want to see an Emberá dance).[8] Cultural presentations for tourists, very similar to those practised in Chagres, are available in several communities in Darién, and can be organized at short notice at the demand of an inquisitive traveller who is willing to pay and/or buy some locally produced artefacts (cf. Theodossopoulos 2007).

Emberá clothes, stereotypes, and ethnic identification

Male attire

The most representative clothing item of a Chocó (Emberá or Wounaan) man dressed in traditional style is the loincloth (*andiá*[E], *guayuco*[S]).[9] Within the contemporary Emberá world, its use is associated with adherence to the old ways. Among non-indigenous Panamanians, the same representation is used as a stereotype of primitiveness or ignorance of 'civilized' life: the Indian with a *guayuco* is a wild man living in the forest, wearing only a loincloth, or being naked except for a loincloth. Among the Emberá, these old-fashioned connotations are mediated by an emerging sense of pride in upholding an Emberá identity, despite the scorn of the general public. In this respect, the use of the loincloth, such as in the context of presentations for tourists, for example, is an identity statement: 'I am an Emberá and I am not embarrassed to wear a loincloth'.

During fieldwork, usually following activities or conversations that indicated my enthusiastic identification with the Emberá point of view, my respondents teased me encouragingly with the remark that 'tomorrow' or 'next time' I should 'wear a *guayuco*'. However, despite its strong connotations as an indicator of upholding or desiring to identify with Emberá tradition, today the loincloth is used only on occasions that require the presentation of the indigenous self to outsiders. It is made from an un-patterned piece of brightly coloured cotton fabric (usually red, yellow, green, or blue) tied around the waist with a string.

On top of the loincloth, some Emberá men wear the *amburá*[E], a belt – or broad 'girdle' (Stout 1963: 270; Wassén 1935: 70) – made of colourful glass beads (*chaquira*[S]) woven in geometric patterns. These items of clothing were used in celebrations in the past (cf. Reverte Coma 2002; Torres de Araúz 1966), and have been reintroduced nowadays in presentations for tourists. In some communities, such as Parara Puru, every adult man has one, while in some other communities the men refuse to wear the *amburá*, even if this is solely for the entertainment of tourists. They say that they feel 'more comfortable wearing only the *andiá*', but when prompted they reveal that they dislike the *amburá* for its skirt-like and female appearance. Contemporary *amburás* are approximately 4 to 5 cm longer than the ones used in the past; the latter can be described as wide belts, the former as very short skirts.

The increase in length of the *amburás* is an adaptation aimed at decreasing the overall minimalism of male attire. As Reverte Coma (2002: 213) observes, seen from behind, a man wearing a loincloth (but not an *amburá*) looks almost completely naked. This observation explains the enthusiastic introduction of somewhat wider *amburás*, which cover a man's bottom like a mini skirt. 'Some elderly *gringas*' (American women), my respondents in Parara Puru humorously explained, 'did not like our buttocks!'

There are several other, less controversial adornments that the Emberá men wear when dressed in traditional attire. These include the arm cuffs (*pulseras*[S], *maniyia*[E]) – in the past made from silver, and nowadays from stainless steel – long beaded strings (*kotiábari*[E]) that stretch from each shoulder to the opposite hip, and necklaces formed of beads interspersed with small silver pendants or, more rarely, animal teeth. These are all in frequent use in Parara Puru and other communities in Chagres that entertain tourists. Some men in Darién keep adornments of greater value, such as headdresses made of coins strung together or silver earrings with many layers. In Chagres, very few men have in their possession adornments of this type. My male respondents in Parara Puru, when I showed them photographs taken by earlier ethnographers, identified such adornments with nostalgia, reflecting upon memories of grandfathers using them.

Female attire

The *paruma*[S] skirt (*wa*[E]) is a quintessential Chocó garment that communicates the ethnic identity of its bearer, and stands emblematic of an indigenous identification more generally. In non-indigenous Panamanian towns, the Chocó women (Emberá and Wounaan alike) can be easily recognized by their colourful *parumas*, in a similar way that Kuna and Ngáwbe women can be identified by their own distinctive modes of dress. Here, female dress is emblematic of indigenous identities (Howe 1998: 17, 125, 178; Salvador 1997: 151; Tice 1995: 28, 47, 81; Young 1971: 10-15). It is also interesting to note that the men of all these ethnic groups are dressed in Western clothes and it is often the dress of a wife or a daughter that will identify the ethnicity of an indigenous man who is walking in the town with his family. Thus with respect to dress codes and practices, indigenous women in Panama, like elsewhere, are 'icons of contemporary ethnic tradition' (Knauft 2007: 103). The majority of the Emberá living within the semi-autonomous reservations insist that their wives and daughters wear the *paruma*, while *parumas* are also conspicuous in communities outside the reservations.

The overwhelming majority of Emberá women whom I met in Chagres and in Darién do not need much persuasion to wear the *paruma*. Apart from being recognized as a very light and comfortable garment to wear in daily life, the *paruma* has also emerged as a type of dress with a distinctive fashion. Today the *parumas* are manufactured in Asia (mostly in Japan), made specifically for the Emberá, and according to Emberá size specification and preference of design, which are normally nature motifs, with flowers or birds in vivid colours. It is important to note here that the Emberá would not buy fabrics made in Asia for other indigenous groups, such as the Kuna, and vice versa. The standard length of a *paruma* is 3 yards, and a bolt of this length of *paruma* cloth – selling for between $8 and $18 – is wide enough to make two such skirts. The most recent designs are always more expensive, and several Emberá women wait expectantly to buy the season's 'new *paruma*', with its distinctive colours and patterns. In this respect, particular *paruma* styles become fads, as with some *mola* themes among the Kuna (Salvador 1976).

Parumas are essentially rectangular pieces of cloth, which are wrapped tightly around one's hips like a skirt, the loose end carefully tucked in at the waist. The skirt then falls to about knee-length. The many bright colours and patterns that adorn them make them easy to match with a top. They therefore provide an opportunity to combine tradition with modernity: the use of the *paruma* represents a desire to identify with an indigenous identity, while its combination with t-shirts, vest tops, tank tops, and cropped tops displays a willingness to cover the upper body in an aesthetic

Figure 2. Emberá woman with *parúma* skirt, beaded necklace, and *jagua* designs.

combination acceptable to the non-indigenous society.[10] This versatility of the *parumas* and their materiality – their 'actual feel' (Küchler 2005) in texture, which is soft and 'comfortable', as Emberá women say – justifies their popularity.

Another item of clothing with a long history, which has lately been adapted to accommodate the non-indigenous aesthetic of covering the upper body, is the *ubarí*[E] (*pulseras de plata*[S]), a heavily beaded necklace that extends over the chest hung with layers of coins. The coins can be dollar quarters, but also old or contemporary coins from different countries (cf. Reverte Coma 2002: 232). In the last twenty years, the beaded component of the *ubarí* has evolved so that it looks more like a top than a necklace. This adaptation provides some cover to the otherwise topless female body of Emberá women dressed in traditional attire, and is another example of accommodating non-indigenous aesthetics and principles of modesty into Emberá clothing practices.

Other elements of Emberá attire for women comprise smaller necklaces with silver pendants, virtually identical to those wore by men, and earrings, which are smaller than the old multi-layered earrings of men. Torres de Araúz (1966; 1980) and Reverte Coma (2002), reflecting on their ethnographic observations in the 1960s, report that Emberá women's code of dress is more modest and less flamboyant than that of Emberá men.

Figure 3. Emberá woman in Darién with *parúma* skirt combined with modern top and necklace with cold-hammered silver pendant.

In some cases the only ornament of young girls is flowers – in particular, hibiscus flowers – attached to their long hair (*budá*[E]). Emberá women of all ages take good care of their hair, combing it carefully and frequently, and when dressed in traditional attire, they weave crowns – from *nahuala*[S] or *bijao*[S] fibres[11] – onto which they attach flowers.

Emberá body painting

Body painting is a cultural practice that survived the decline of traditional Emberá attire at the end of the twentieth century. Although not all contemporary Emberá systematically practise body painting, the majority indulge in it for the sheer pleasure of ornamentation and because they value the medicinal properties of the painting medium, the juice of the *jagua*[S] fruit (*kipará*[E], *Genipa americana*[L]). *Jagua* provides a dark blue, almost black colour, which fades away eight to twelve days later,[12] allowing for new artistic experiments and applications. The Emberá insist that *jagua* can improve the overall condition of the skin. When a sufficient quantity of this fruit is available, they don't hesitate to apply it more generally, sometimes covering their body in uniform black, other times indulging in artistic decoration with geometric designs that cover the arms, the face, the torso, or their whole body.[13]

Body painting with *jagua* in Darién has been recorded in early colonial documents (Revert Coma 2002: 222) and it is a widespread practice among other lowland South American groups, such as the Kaipó (cf. Turner 1980; 1992; Vidal & Verswijver 1992) and the Piro (Gow 1999). In the past, apart from the black/blue colour of the *jagua*, the Emberá also used red, which they extracted from the seeds of the *achiote*[S] tree (*canyi*[E], *Bixa orellana*[L]) (Reverte Coma 2002: 221; Torres de Araúz 1966: 56; cf. Tayler 1996: 52; Ulloa 1992: 179-80; Wassén 1935: 72), although in Panama this practice is now rare.[14] Unlike some Amazonian groups (cf. Turner 1980), the Panamanian Emberá are not very concerned with the colour of the painting – since they are using mostly *jagua* black – but they have a wide repertoire of designs. In traditional curative ceremonies, the shaman (*haibaná*[E]) will choose carefully what pattern to apply, after consultation with an aiding spirit, which informs him during his sleep.

An important purpose of body painting in the Emberá curative process is to hide (and therefore protect) the identity of the patient from the spirits that are present during the ceremony. The patient is believed to temporarily embody a particular spirit – of an animal, plant, or object – which is responsible for the disease, and which the shaman has to expel. For this purpose, the shaman calls other spirits that can scare the 'illness-inflicting' spirit away or entice it (e.g. through sexual attraction) to depart from the patient's body. During the first night of the curative process, the shaman attempts to ascertain the nature of the problem – that is, what spirit causes the illness. On the following day, if he thinks this is necessary, he paints the torso, arms, and legs of the patient with a geometrical design representing an appropriate animal, plant or object. The shaman might also paint his assistant – a woman who helps him during the ceremony – with a different, but again appropriate, design, or ask his assistant to paint the patient the required design.

Each shaman has two or three favourite designs that he applies more frequently. For example, the last practising shaman in Chagres relied on the designs of *saú-pa* (the painting of the calabash, *totumo*[S]) and *damá-pa* (the painting of the snake), while I have recorded variations of the same and different designs from other shamans. What is important to note here is that the procedure followed by a shaman in each cure is by no means identical: complex considerations that relate to the interrelationship of different spirits may influence the shaman's choices, including choices with respect to body painting and design. It is also important to consider that shamanic practices among the Emberá of Panama are in decline: there are still a few practising shamans who attract several patients, while many Emberá, as they identify more closely with Christianity, do not discuss directly the ritual dimension of body painting – which is, after all, the domain of shamans.

In fact the overwhelming majority of body-paint applications in an individual's life occur outside curing rituals. Ulloa, in a study of Emberá designs in Colombia, identifies additional contexts of body painting apart from shamanic ceremonies: community celebrations, traditional dancing, the inauguration of a new home, puberty initiations, and everyday personal use, including body beautification, expressions of happiness and pain, or intentions to inspire love (1992: 134, 298-302; cf. Isacsson 1993: 32; Pineda Giraldo & Gutiérrez de Pineda 1999: 114-15). In discussion about body painting, my Emberá respondents in Panama are likely to accentuate the medicinal or ornamental uses of *jagua*, rather than its ritual significance. The former include protection from sun and insects (with *jagua* working as a sunscreen and insect repellent, respectively) (cf. Isacsson 1993: 32; Torres de Araúz 1966: 56) or the use of *jagua* to dye the hair of

Figure 4. Topless Emberá women in Darién body painting. The older woman is applying a shamanic design for a healing ceremony.

ageing men and women black, a practice that deludes tourists into believing that there are not enough old Emberá. Newborn babies are also painted with *jagua*, to obtain, as my respondents maintain, beautiful and smooth skin in their adulthood. More generally, *jagua* body paint – nowadays as in the past – is applied for the sheer pleasure of ornamentation. The designs used are often geometric simplifications of old shamanic patterns, or playful naturalistic themes (such as leafs, birds, and flowers). Referring to this ornamental use, most Emberá will agree that *jagua* paint is, more or less, like clothing (*como un vestido*) (cf. Isacsson 1993: 32) – or, from an anthropological perspective, a type of 'social skin' (Turner 1980).

While travelling in Darién, I have seen Emberá painted with *jagua* in communities outside the semi-autonomous reservations, including the new Emberá and Wounaan neighbourhoods that have recently emerged in the suburbs of the old Darienita towns. In the main streets of these towns, the visitor can observe middle-aged (*paruma*-wearing) Emberá women whose palms are stained black from frequently using *jagua*, or young adolescent girls dressed in modern clothes for an afternoon outing (with girlfriends or a boyfriend) whose arms or face are decorated with beautiful *jagua* designs. In all cases, body painting conveys identification with an indigenous identity.

Body painting is also applied in the context of preparations to host tourists in communities that have developed tourism, but also in those that need to entertain

Figure 5. Non-geometric naturalistic *jagua* design on the arms of an Emberá girl in Parara Puru. Her hands are completely covered with *jagua,* which indicates that she has also been painting others.

occasional visitors. The Emberá often ask the visitors if they desire a *jagua* 'tattoo' and paint on the arm or leg of those who agree a traditional geometrical pattern, or even a design requested by the visitor, such as a flower or a bird. The tourists pay a dollar or a similar amount to the indigenous body-painter, who could be an adult woman, an adolescent girl, or a young man. Several tourists have shared with me their excitement at this experience, which represents a playful opportunity to temporarily embody an artful dimension of Emberá culture.

Clothing practices and dilemmas in Parara Puru

With respect to their use of modern clothes, the Emberá of the Chagres area are not that different from the majority of Emberá living in communities that do not entertain tourists in Darién.[15] Outside the context of presentations for tourists, the men wear shorts or trousers and shirts or t-shirts. They are more likely to wear flip-flops close to home, rubber boots when clearing the forest or hunting, and shoes or sparkling white trainers on their ventures to the town. The majority of women wear *paruma* skirts throughout the day in their communities, but also in neighbouring non-indigenous

towns. In trips to the city – to visit relatives, a hospital, or a government institution – they might temporarily replace the *paruma* with a non-indigenous skirt, or they might continue wearing their *parumas* irrespective of the destination. Young unmarried or married women might also wear shorts (instead of a *paruma*) to go to a birthday party, a date, or an outing outside their immediate community, while other young women dress for the same occasions with a *paruma* and t-shirt combination, but replace their ordinary top with a newer or slightly more expensive one.

The dress preferences described above do not change significantly with respect to a man's or a woman's age. Young women sometimes wear shorts, but older women do not, while young men might prefer t-shirts with elaborate designs that change according to fashion. With these exceptions, dress choices and style are usually fairly standardized among the Emberá in Panama. While in the past, older or renowned men had more adornments than younger men and women, nowadays differences of status with respect to dress are no longer accentuated (and when so, not to the same degree as before). Even when dressed in traditional attire, younger and older men and women of the same community wear more or less the same types of adornments.

What could change during an individual's life is the degree of identification with modern or traditional dress codes, such as, for example, in regard to the extent of nudity (overall) or use of the *parumas* (more particularly). Potential changes of this type do not always follow the same direction or pattern (e.g. from tradition to modernity). Many Emberá women adopt during their lifetime the Western aesthetic of covering their upper body (all the time, or most of the time), while others, especially in communities that have developed tourism, might choose to increase the overall time they remain topless – as all Emberá women did in the past and as some still do in Darién – during everyday activities in the vicinity of the domestic compound.

A 30-year-old woman from Darién who now lives in Parara Puru with her Chagres-born husband often stays topless in the close vicinity of her house, even after the tourists' departure. She and her husband are proud and very articulate about their identification with Emberá culture. The woman's sisters, however, live in a non-indigenous small community in Darién, where the Emberá are a very small minority. When I visited the sisters on a short field trip I was surprised to realize that not only did they avoid toplessness, but they also wear skirts instead of *parumas*. They explained their choice as a by-product of life among an overwhelming non-indigenous majority. Their sister in Parara Puru was once dressed like them, but discovered the benefits and importance of the 'Emberá way' of clothing after moving into an all-Emberá community in Chagres.

Another woman in Parara Puru, who is 24 years old, similarly identifies enthusiastically with Emberá traditional practices. She always wears a *paruma*, even in the town, but to avoid complete toplessness she always combines her *paruma* with a cotton top, or, when dressed in full traditional attire, with a beaded necklace. She feels very content that tourism has provided her with opportunities to wear traditional attire, which is – she recently came to realize – 'very beautiful'. However, in her childhood her father tried to make her believe otherwise, and did not allow her to dance or wear earrings and beaded necklaces. 'My parents raised me like this, because my father became Christian', she explained.

Several other respondents, men and women, have related to me their satisfaction with the freedom they experience now with respect to their clothing choices. Within their community they are free to wear traditional attire, and in fact, nowadays with

Figure 6. Emberá from Parara Puru in full modern clothes on their way to Panama City.

tourism, they have daily opportunities to do so. However, when the tourists depart, the men replace their loincloths with shorts, and many men and women put on t-shirts. In the Emberá world, complete Emberá attire with all its adornments has always been reserved for special occasions, such as celebrations, visits to other communities, and the hosting of important guests and, now, tourists. When some inquisitive tourists ask if the residents of Parara Puru are 'dressed like this all the time', the Emberá reply diplomatically that they take off the beaded strings, the arm cuffs and the necklaces to carry on their daily chores more comfortably, and that when they visit the town they have to wear t-shirts, since Panamanian law prohibits toplessness.

In responding to such questions, the residents of Parara Puru do not lie, but avoid challenging directly the idealized expectations of the tourists (Theodossopoulos 2011). What the tourists are rarely able to witness is that sometimes some young Emberá women leave their much-loved *parumas* at home and their children with relatives to go out with their young husbands – who wear shiny sports shoes, cropped trousers, and t-shirts – for a walk and fast food in the town. This is for them an opportunity to wear their newest modern clothes, and spend some time in broader society, dressed as modern Panamanians. The majority of the tourists also do not suspect that currently five Emberá from Parara Puru – two young men and three young women – are taking post-high school courses in Panama City. When they leave the village to attend their classes, they dress in fashionable but inexpensive modern clothes like most other young Panamanians of the same age.

Conclusion

In the preceding sections I have discussed the clothing practices of the Emberá in Panama, from the decline of traditional attire in the last quarter of the twentieth century to its gradual re-emergence in the context of presentations for tourists in Chagres. Several parallel and mutual reinforcing processes – such as closer contact with the national majority, resettlement in concentrated communities, school education, missionary activity, the introduction of television sets, and the globalized economy – have contributed to the adoption of industrially manufactured but inexpensive clothes

by the overwhelming majority of the Emberá. Emberá men realized that if they wanted to be 'taken seriously' (Conklin 2007: 24) in the non-Emberá world, they had to replace the negatively stereotyped loincloths with Western clothes. In time, they learned how to 'creatively balance symbolic gains' by shifting between indigenous and national languages (Graham 2002: 183) or indigenous and nationally acceptable clothes. In the context of tourism, the Emberá were confronted with similar dilemmas.

The introduction of tourism at the turn of the twenty-first century provided some Emberá communities, such as Parara Puru in Chagres, with opportunities to dress in full traditional attire on a daily basis, and for the greater part of the day. Frequent use of the Emberá dress code, and its respectful reception by the tourist audience, inspired the self-re-evaluation of traditional clothing practices in the communities that directly benefit from tourism, and more broadly (Theodossopoulos 2010*a*; 2011). The Emberá, who had so far been stereotyped by their Latino neighbours as the naked people of the forest and encouraged to modernize in appearance and conduct, met another type of *kampuniá* (non-Emberá, non-indigenous people, see Kane 1994), the tourists or the *gringos* (North Americans, wealthy white individuals, see Theodossopoulos 2010*b*) – who are economically more powerful than their Latino neighbours, and who do not merely tolerate indigenous culture, but encourage the Emberá to practise and maintain it. Here, a process of exoticization – the idealization of indigenous culture by the *gringos* – set in motion an alternative orientation towards self-representation.

As a result, the preconception of the Western traveller that modernity destroys tradition and cultural diversity (Gow 2007), combined with an aesthetic appreciation of pre-modern cultural forms and styles of dress, has come to privilege traditional and more exotic attire over the use of Western clothes (Conklin 1997; Turner 2006). In this respect, the exoticized stereotype of the vanishing Indian (cf. Clifford 1986; Ramos 1998) acts against the similarly exoticized stereotype of nakedness and savagery. With regard to Emberá dress practices, the clash of these two opposing stereotypes – which proliferate in Western imaginings of the exotic (Conklin 1997; 2007; Conklin & Graham 1995; Ramos 1998; Salazar 2010) – inspired local adaptations of old Western and mixed dress codes. These vary from 'personal political strategies' (Santos-Granero 2009: 493) and 'strategic dissembling' (Conklin 1997: 716-17),[16] to less strategic decisions that involve (a) practical concerns (such as engagement with particular jobs that require more or fewer clothes, or simply availability of clean clothes at any given moment), (b) the partial accommodation of non-indigenous rules of modesty by indigenous attire (such as the introduction of longer *amburás* [male belts] and *ubarís* [necklaces with beads and coins] to minimize male and female nudity, respectively), or (c) personal preference for an emerging fashion of combined dress styles (such as *parumas* matched with various types of tops, or modern clothes combined with *jagua* tattoos and traditional necklaces).

The situational complexity and fluidity of the Emberá dress code described so far 'must be read more as a transformation than as a profound cultural change' leading to deculturation (Gow 2001: 127). Like other Amerindian groups, the Emberá have become accustomed to fine things, such as non-expensive clothes, and they are fascinated by Western goods (Ewart 2007; Gow 2001; Hugh-Jones 1992). Yet, modern clothes bought in the market are often combined with items or types of adornment that are locally identified to represent Emberá culture: *jagua* body painting, *paruma* skirts, and various types of necklaces. Such combinations have, over time, produced identifiably Emberá mixed codes of dress. These should be read as creative responses to the

challenges posed by, for example, the conflicting aesthetic criteria introduced by outsiders. As with other indigenous groups, resulting practices and dress codes represent not 'a passive adoption' of other cultures, but 'a conscious effort to establish social relations' with Others (Santos-Granero 2009: 493), who, in the case of the Emberá, are non-indigenous Panamanians and international tourists.

What is worth noticing in this process is that the external challenges that inspire social change stem from two opposing sets of expectations, raised by the two categories of outsiders mentioned above. Non-indigenous Panamanians expect indigenous communities to modernize in manner and appearance and enforce their aesthetic through stereotyping 'the naked' Emberá as the exotic-cum-primitive Other. International tourists expect and encourage indigenous communities to adhere to the old dress code, projecting an idealized admiration for indigeneity as unaffected by change. The dynamic transformations in Emberá dress choices attempt to reconcile these contradictory expectations by compartmentalizing dress choices according to contexts: traditional attire when hosting tourists, modern clothes when visiting the big city, varied combinations of mixed codes of dress in neighbouring Latino towns and closer to home – particularly in the 'culturally intimate' company of other Emberá, those with whom one shares the recognition of external embarrassments and collective assurance (Herzfeld 1997: 3).

Whether in the city, the home, or in the presence or absence of tourists, the Emberá argue that they remain Emberá independently of the clothes they wear. In their overwhelming majority, and in most contexts of everyday life, the Emberá do not mislead the wider world into believing that they are something other than Emberá. Like many other indigenous people in South America, they do not desire to be or become white people (Conklin 1997; Ewart 2007; Gow 2007; Santos-Granero 2009; Veber 1996). In a broader social context where the term 'Indian' denotes 'a racial category' (Wade 1997: 36), Emberá identity is treated by the Emberá themselves as indisputable and self-evident. As a respondent in Parara Puru pointed out, it is not the clothes that make an Emberá; it is rather 'our language, our culture and our race'. Then, with a short reflexive pose, he continued: 'In the past, we were ashamed to walk in the town painted with *jagua*. Now they [the Latinos] know that we work with tourists and don't bother us anymore'.

Thus, it appears that by the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, the Emberá, like other minority groups, had grasped the opportunities provided by an increasingly globalized tourism economy to enhance their visibility more widely, 'reach out to the world' (A. Strathern & Stewart 2009; Theodossopoulos 2009), and escape from the discrimination they received in the past. Seen from this point of view, the transformations of Emberá dress I describe in this article represent the collective accommodation of discrepancies – 'disjunctures' that account for 'the production of difference' (Appadurai 1996: 199) – in the exoticized expectations of outsiders: those who idealize and those who stereotype. The very same accommodations have resulted not merely in the reproduction of older (or declining) cultural practices, but also in the production of new, mixed and culturally meaningful dress codes and local fashions. From this wider point of view, we can appreciate the reintroduction of traditional attire in some communities that have developed tourism not as a static evocation of a timeless past, but as an attempt to take advantage of Western exoticization, increase indigenous representation, and embrace the freedom to choose what clothes to wear in discrete contexts of daily life. As an Emberá woman in Parara Puru further explained:

'I like modern clothes ... but I like the Emberá clothes more. It makes me happy to see that my children use the *parumas* and the loincloth. In our community we are free to dress in traditional clothes too!'

NOTES

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[1] The Panamanian Emberá explicitly recognize that their forefathers came from Colombia; for many these were literally their fathers, grandparents or great-grandparents. Others cannot trace this migration in terms of genealogical connections. Overall, it is very difficult to pinpoint the beginning of Emberá migration to Panama, which (most probably) started in the eighteenth century (Herlihy 2003: 318; Howe 1998: 214; Williams 2004: 224) and has continued until the present.

[2] In Panama, the term Chocoes has been used as a negative ethnic stereotype to accentuate the Colombian origins of the Emberá and Wounaan (see Theodossopoulos 2010*a*). However, until the 1960s, ethnographers used the term Chocó extensively, as a useful and more inclusive category for analysis and comparison.

[3] See Howe (1998: 205); Isacsson (1993: 112); Krieger (1926: plates 12 [1, 2, 3], 34 [1, 2], 35 [2]); Verrill (1921 [no page numbers]); Wassén (1935: 31, 85, 96, 156).

[4] Previously a subsistence crop, plantain cultivation became the principal cash-crop for the Emberá of Darién.

[5] See photographs in Howe (1998: 221); Krieger (1926: plate 12 [3]); Reverte Coma (2002: 73, 123, 215); Tayler (1996: 42); Torres de Araúz (1966: 11, 31, 150); Wassén (1935: 109).

[6] Although there are a few communities in Darién that receive tourists on a less frequent basis.

[7] This might range from approximately $12 to $30 per person depending on the size of the group: larger groups provide a greater income and the Emberá can afford to lower their admission fee in their negotiation with the agents.

[8] Kane, who conducted her fieldwork in the 1980s, reports occasions when the Emberá women danced bare-breasted (in traditional attire) for Panamanian officials, while the Emberá men enacted politics dressed in formal Western clothes (1994: 167). It is interesting to note that in the context of tourism both men and women use the traditional code of dress.

[9] In transliterated terms, ^{E} stands for Emberá, ^{S} for Spanish, and ^{L} for Latin.

[10] Tice describes a similar shifting of dress codes among Kuna girls, who, unlike the Emberá, make more definite choices about which style of dress, Western or traditional, to adopt in adult life (1995: 82).

[11] *Nahuala* (*Carludovica palmata*^{L}) is also known as Panama Hat Palm; *bijao* is a species of *Calathea*^{L} plant.

[12] The *jagua* juice is extracted when the fruit is still green. In the beginning it is transparent, but it acquires its characteristic dark blue colour through oxidization. When it is applied on the skin, it is grey in appearance, becoming dark blue, almost black, as it dries.

[13] For applying the paint, the Emberá use a thin stick of bamboo (*bakurú*^{E}). In the past they used painting sticks with two or three points to paint symmetrical parallel lines. They even used a wooden painting stamp (*pintadera*^{S}) with prefabricated designs (Isacsson 1993: 33; Pineda Giraldo & Gutiérrez de Pineda 1999: 113; Reverte Coma 2002: 224; Torres de Araúz 1966: 57; Ulloa 1992: 181).

[14] Face designs with *achiote* red, say some of my older male respondents, were used by young men who wanted to flirt with girls (cf. Ulloa 1992). Nowadays, *achiote* is more likely to be used by women.

[15] Owing to their improved financial capacity, they are able to afford slightly more expensive modern clothes, but still within the inexpensive price range.

[16] The adoption of normative codes of dress (on the surface) to obstruct unwanted attention from cultural difference (within).

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Tenues indigènes, exotisation et changement social: se vêtir et se dévêtir chez les Emberá du Panama

Résumé

Dans le dernier quart du XX^{ème} siècle, les Emberá du Panama ont renoncé à leur tenue traditionnelle et adopté les vêtements occidentaux. L'apparition du tourisme indigène dans le pays a pourtant suscité un récent retour en grâce de la tenue traditionnelle et favorisé sa visibilité dans le pays et à l'étranger. Ces transformations du vêtement des Emberá, abandonné puis redécouvert, peuvent jeter un éclairage sur le caractère fluide et multidirectionnel du changement social dans les sociétés autochtones. L'auteur affirme que la tendance occidentale à l'exotisation, inhérente aux attentes d'authenticité et/ou au soupçon que certaines traditions sont « inventées », ne rend pas correctement compte de la complexité et de la nature dynamique des pratiques vestimentaires chez les Emberá. Il vaudrait mieux envisager les choix actuels de ceux-ci sur la manière de s'habiller dans tel ou tel contexte comme des réponses à deux formes d'exotisme: les stéréotypes et/ou l'idéalisation des pratiques indigènes. De ce point de vue, la réintroduction des anciennes manières de se vêtir, lorsqu'elle a lieu, ne doit pas être perçue comme une imitation statique du passé mais comme une adaptation réfléchie à de nouvelles possibilités de représentation culturelle dans le présent.

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